RELIGION IN THE AMERICAN COLLEGE

EDWARD STERLING BOYER

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RELIGION IN THE AMERICAN COLLEGE

A Study and Interpretation of Facts

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER PAGE

INTRODUCTORY NOTE 7

I. THE SEARCH FOR REALITY 9

Religious instruction given in terms of theology—The shift of emphasis to Bible study—The present social trend in religion.

II. THE RELIGIOUS FUNCTION 18

The college with close church control—The college with little church control—The independent college—Schools of religion at State universities and State colleges—Courses in the field of religion—To what extent are these courses taught?—How many students take religion courses—Religious qualities of teachers—The influence of religious atmosphere.

III. THE DEPARTMENT OF RELIGION 32

The historic Bible department—Combination departments — Religious education causes a new problem—The religious contribution of chapel exercises—The nature and number of courses—Relation to other departments.

IV. THE CURRICULUM OF RELIGION 43

Teachers and their training—The degree or degrees earned by the teachers—Church membership of the religion teachers—Teachers of Religious Education—The major—Degrees and credit—Textbooks used in teaching religion.

CHAPTER PAGE

V. STUDENT RELATIONSHIP TO THE STUDY OF RELIGION 56

The results shown by the studies—Underlying attitudes.

VI. LIMITATIONS IN THE PROCESS 61

Economic aspects of teaching religion in colleges—Other evidence of financial limitations—Status of the teachers—Kinds of administrators needed for religion—Limitations of library facilities.

VII. TEACHING RELIGION AT STATE UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES 71

Religious significance of the rise of State universities—Fortunes of religion in State-controlled education—Religious needs of students at State schools—The awakening of the churches to the religious needs of students at State schools—Nature of the schools of religion at State institutions—The program of religious education at State schools—Objectives sought by these schools—Facts concerning the schools of religion—Assets for religion in State schools—Some conditions under which schools of religion function.

VIII. THE DEVELOPMENT OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN COLLEGES 83

Differences in viewpoint—Immediate causes of growth of the movement for education in religion—The program for religious education in the colleges—Present status—Standards of colleges offering courses—Status of teachers—Methods of instruction.

CHAPTER PAGE

IX. THE COLLEGE CONTRIBUTES TO RELIGION.... 92

A change of method—The twilight of the sciences—The college trains public school teachers—The college contributes trained leadership—The college trains church school teachers—Contributions of research.

BIBLIOGRAPHY.............................. 104

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

The purpose of this little volume is to indicate as accurately as possible the present status and conditions with respect to the teaching of religion in colleges of the United States. It should not be assumed that every college has been investigated. But data from a sufficient number have been secured so that statements needing statistical foundation are adequately buttressed.

Several monographs, with scientifically gathered material, have been drawn upon in making this presentation. Special mention should be made of the usefulness of the Alderton, Clapp, Hanna, Limbert, Murphy, Richards, Columbia University *Study on Religious Education in* 172 *Colleges*, The University of Iowa Study Series I, No. 141, on *The Study of Religion in State Universities*, by Herbert L. Searles, McGee's University of Pennsylvania study of *Religious Education in Certain Evangelical Colleges*, and the Edwards, Artman, *Undergraduates: A Study of Morale in Twenty-three American Colleges and Universities.** These, along with the author's own investigations in this special field extending over a period of the last ten years, were thought sufficient to give adequate basis for the material forming these chapters.

The author was convinced that many footnotes in a volume such as this are irksome to the reader. He has therefore placed the references together in the back of the book. Numbers throughout the book correspond with the ones for the stated reference. These may be found without difficulty.

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* All found listed in the bibliography at the end of this book.

An expression of thanks is due to the many people who have labored in gathering material for these various studies and from which I draw considerable information. Their reward should be in the further publication of the facts which they secured and for which labor they have been given due recognition.

Further appreciation is due my wife, Elsie Venner Boyer, whose kind assistance has made the writing of the book possible.

Edward S. Boyer.

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CHAPTER I

THE SEARCH FOR REALITY

"YOUTH to-day is hunting for a way of life. We want to know a philosophy about the religion of Jesus that will satisfy our intelligence and cause a fellowship with Christ that will give us self-respect." This statement was made recently by a young college student speaking before a gathering of students from colleges throughout the United States. The meaning of such a search as this expression would indicate cuts deep into the heart of American college problems.

The critical attitude of youth toward life has its counterpart in the questioning attitude of adults toward the teaching of religion in colleges. Is the college a religious institution? Can the college satisfy religious interests? How may the college raise the religious tone of society? What is the responsibility of the college for training religious leaders? Is the college serving its original purpose? These questions are being hurled at the college authorities for answer.

A contemporary philosopher has said: "There are two kinds of life, one is the brush-pile life; the other the big tree life. One is a pile of twigs and branches; the other is an organic system." Apparently, that which youth seeks is an organized way of life represented by the tree.

One might push the tree illustration a bit further and say with the poet, Joyce Kilmer, "Only God can make a tree." This is not to say that youths need leave the construction of their religious life to the fate of mystical and unknown processes entirely. But it does suggest that the demand upon a college to make youth religious is not so simple as carrying out a formula.

Religious instruction given in terms of theology. In the colonial period college students were compelled to learn their religion through the theological channels of the times. The fires of the Protestant Reformation were still burning in Europe. Winds of doctrine had tossed embers even to the shores of the New World. In this first period Harvard and Yale colleges were more nearly theological institutions than otherwise. Theological disputations, commonplacing the Scriptures, and study of the catechism made religion and doctrine matters of common discussion. Teachers were compelled to subscribe to the Westminster Confession, and, more specifically, to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, the doctrine of the Godhead, predestination, special grace, and the divine right of baptism.[1] Students sitting in close study with teachers who had made such creedal affirmations could not but feel the doctrinal strain of the day. They were called upon soberly to ponder the foundations of their religious beliefs in the interest of all they held valuable in education.

Theology, based on the Bible, comprehended about the whole expanse of knowledge. Philosophy was included, while the languages—Latin, Greek, and Hebrew—were unfalteringly trusted to carry the religious heritage of the past to the students. A profound emotional awakening in religion took place in the second quarter of the eighteenth century. Both Yale and Harvard fought against the inroads of the emotionalists. Nevertheless, many students and some teachers became separatists. Denominational strife was rampant. Heresy, false doctrine, and schism came into the colleges. All public expression in the college was theological in nature. Plays and all irreligious expression and sentiment were prohibited.

Yet the last half of this same century marks the invasion of deism and atheism into the colleges of Harvard, Yale, and Brown. By the close of the century students and some teachers were openly favoring deism.[2] The strong hortatory methods used in the promulgation of theological creeds found their opposite in the free running attitudes of the deists. Apparently, religion in terms of theology was unsatisfactory. College religious life, even in those far-off days, would not easily remain in theological molds.

The shift of emphasis to Bible study. Back of theology stood the Bible. In reality, Protestantism made the Bible its center of authority. At Princeton College, in 1750, it was the custom of the students to gather for morning and evening prayers. At this time a chapter of the Bible was read; sometimes a hymn also was sung. But that was not all. Hebrew and Greek, the original languages of the Old and New Testaments, were freely stressed as a part of the early college curriculum. Theology found its sanction in the Bible. Government was purposely established in the Massachusetts colony after the pattern principles in the Old Testament.

During the last part of the eighteenth and the first part of the nineteenth centuries the Bible was studied more for its own sake. They wanted to know whether knowledge of the Bible contributed to theology. The chief study of the Bible was of a literary character. This involved an extensive use of the original languages in which the Bible was written.

The historical approach, of more recent date, vitalized the Bible books and made significant many of the problems involved in the writings. Colleges which developed during the national period centered their religious instruction in Bible Departments. Courses chiefly of a literary nature were given. By the close of this period, as the colleges advanced into the modern phase of American life, the historical study of the Bible became dominant. This change did much to dispose of certain erroneous ideas that had caused serious trouble in religious thinking. The change did not come without struggle. Yet the historical approach brought a closer understanding, and a more thorough sympathy with the personalities and experiences of the biblical characters.

The present social trend in religion. The recent tendency in many of the colleges is to emphasize the social sciences. A survey of the curricula of ten colleges and universities during the current year by Dean Batson, of the University of South Dakota, shows that in the space of the last ten years courses in the social sciences in these institutions increased over thirty per cent. This may not mean so much concerning religion courses in particular. It certainly does mean that there is an emphasis in the direction of the study of human relationships.

President Walter Dill Scott, of Northwestern University, stated recently: "The most fruitful researches during the twentieth century will probably be conducted, not in the natural sciences, but in the social sciences. We are at last coming to see that 'the proper study of mankind is man.' All of our human relations will be improved as rapidly as we make progression in the social sciences." Now we are more concerned with practical religious values, with human relations, with social conduct. This means that religious sanctions are being sought for the principles of right living in a socially complex world.

The objectives of teaching religion in the colleges may be stated as follows:

(1) *To develop religiously motivated personalities.* "Cul-

ture," says an eighteenth-century philosopher, "is a very delicate flower. It must not only have a good economic soil in which to grow, but it must be cultivated by intelligent and public-spirited conservators." A liberal arts college is not a vocational school. It has for its major task the fitting of young individuals to live effectively in society. The creative mental attitudes of the students should have full opportunity to assimilate the spiritual possessions of the race. The ultimate test of the educational process in a democracy is its ability to develop every realizable power and purpose within the personality of the individual. The vital experiences of college youth should have meaning in terms of their concept of God and also in terms of their relationship to society. Every known value that functions to build the "more abundant life" in the life of the student has its place in the basic material used in the teaching process.

(2) *To spread religious intelligence.* The modern state takes no direct responsibility in making citizens Christian. It is committed to no policy of contributing to the religious intelligence of the people. Very early in the history of our government, in fact during the administration of our first President, a supreme law of the land was passed which stated, "As the government of the United States of America is not, in any sense, founded on the Christian religion . . . ." This barrier created between the church and state was definite and effective.[3]

Agencies definitely responsible must foster intelligence concerning the history and principles of religion. The American college, born of the church, and its primary educational agent, must diffuse the knowledge necessary to enlighten society with respect to religion. This burden was laid on it in the beginning. No reasons have been advanced for changing the location of this responsibility.

Perhaps, having gone this far, the question has been raised as to whether religion can be taught. A familiar quotation has it, "Religion is caught, not taught." Certainly, religious phases of life which issue from the creative powers of God and give spiritual motivation are not taught. They are achieved, but only after proper conditions have been met and expressions made. The religious elements are gained by dint of struggle.

Truth concerning the religious life which has been lived out in the activities of men must be learned. Mere knowledge of the process does not constitute learning. The functioning of ideals and purposes must be known and appreciated. Such may come through the motives of the teacher being related to that which is learned in such a manner that the student motives are developed in the process.

(3) *To give vocational training in religion.* Previously it has been stated that the liberal arts college does not have for its major purpose the training of students for

the different vocations, even religious vocations. Religious instruction in the college seeks to attain ends which have to do with enlarging human vision, setting up ideals of unselfish service and other humane purposes. The spiritual traditions and inheritances of mankind can be shown and appreciated. Spiritual habits may be developed in the individual. Enough of the technique of religious education and expression may be presented to guide in the further development of a religious profession.

(4) *To develop skill in living religion.* To command a good method of living is more useful than to acquire any amount of unrelated information. That students may acquire a skill in the use of religious intelligence is of prime importance. Next to that is the acquiring and maintaining of intellectual interests. With the dynamic urges of life present in all, it is only a step from skill in the use of intelligence to the proper functioning of knowledge gained. Every vital idea has a motor quality when lodged in an alert young mind. There is a tendency for facts to get translated into action when it is understood how they relate themselves to life. For instance, when it is fully understood how we are to gain and maintain proper race relations, build the laws for world peace, establish Christian standards in our industrial relations, develop a Christian morality in the economic order, we shall not be long delayed in establishing the ends sought in respect to these desiderata.

In the application of energy to the task of solving such problems the use of special knowledge is imperative. The struggle has creative phases in it for the individual. In the experiences of life new goals are discovered and new hope to achieve them. Tolerance, sympathy, goodwill and other virtues are achieved. Some problems are settled for lack of interest. Rightly or wrongly time settles them. Creative religious living, however, settles problems by meeting the enemies of good with the superior spiritual forces of intelligent and powerfully organized personalities.

That the teaching of religion in colleges is of far-reaching consequence in building intelligently organized and religiously motivated personalities is assumed by the writer of this volume. The purpose of the following chapters is to indicate the nature and amount of teaching being done in the field of religion; also, to show the means that are being used to do such teaching; and, finally, insofar as the facts may be discovered, to indicate the effect such teaching produces.

CHAPTER II

THE RELIGIOUS FUNCTION

It may be said of colleges as of people that there are no two alike. Educational institutions everywhere take on certain characteristics from the society in which they are established. The period in which they are founded, motivations of the founders, purposes which the college is to serve, its geographical location, and the social characteristics of the people constitute the bases for the differences that exist between them.

In the midst of the differences such fundamental elements of likeness exist that they fall into certain classified groups. Christ Church College, at Oxford in old England, compared with the new Brothers College of Drew University is an illustration. Christ Church College, set in ancient English tradition, is built into the history of that old and honorable institution, Oxford University. Brothers College is an infant among educational institutions of America, gauging its standards to the needs and purposes of a swift-moving, highly mechanized, modern age. Yet the two institutions have deep-running purposes that would seem to put them in the same class.

The college with close church control. There is sound truth in the statement that American colleges generally have been established by reason of religious motives. Men have known the necessity of establishing the religious impulse of people with the discriminating and definitive qualities which intelligence contributes. Especially has there been concern with respect to the ministerial leaders that they be intellectually qualified to lead the people.

In view of these needs, college authorities have been, at least, in their beginning periods, leaders in their respective church groups. This close church control obtains at present with a considerable number of the colleges. In fact, they make up more than half of the number. The underlying reason for this control is not far to seek. Established to supply a religiously felt need, the hands that builded have not released control. In the days of infancy and weakness these institutions relied almost wholly upon the gifts and regular offerings from the church organizations.

Few of these colleges could ever have come into existence except for the earnest faith, prayerful hope, and diligent co-operation to seek funds on the part of ministers and laymen in the respective communions. A college located within the bounds of a synod, Conference, or other designated church area, became the child of that area. Authority to direct the procedure and policies of an institution, ordinarily, is corelated with the responsibility of its creation. Church control with this majority of colleges has been and is to-day direct and final.

Many of these church colleges were founded about a century ago as a reaction to the State university movement. Thomas Jefferson, and those who co-operated with him in the effort, established the first State university in Virginia and opened its doors to students in the year 1825. Church groups everywhere understood this to mean that the United States was to have a system of higher education devoid of the religious element. A prejudice was established at this time for the church college and against the State university. The prejudice has held through to the present and has caused the churches to give their college institutions close supervision.

Colleges that are regulated by close church control are considerably fewer than half. The large, heavily endowed institutions are not usually under such control. The smaller colleges need the closer guidance and more immediate help. Administrative officers in smaller colleges are quite aware of the fact that their salvation depends on remaining close to the church organization that founded the institutions. Despite occasional oversolicitude, and possible neglect of educational standards for evangelistic warmth, this type of college must allow close church control in the interest of financial support and student enrollment.

Presidents of these colleges are selected from the leadership of the church group which founded the institutions. Usually, they have been active as preachers, and come to the office with strong leanings toward the ecclesiastical organizations. Members of the boards of control are selected from the ranks of the church leaders, with now and then an exception.

The teaching of religion is expected, although funds for the purpose are often slight. Much is said concerning "religious atmosphere." And often there is close scrutiny of the orthodoxy of the teachers in the college.

The college with little church control. In a certain number of church colleges the direction of policies and procedure is not under the dominant control of the church. This group, from the standpoint of numbers, is in the minority. Yet they are the better equipped, the most heavily endowed, and have, comparatively speaking, the larger student enrollment. Many have grown to take on the characteristics of large universities.

The history of church control in these institutions has developed, with perhaps some variations, after the following manner. The beginning of such colleges had all of the characteristics of the smaller denominational colleges. They were small, having little resources, and were under close control of church authorities. For different reasons, such as well-qualified administrative officers, an unusually efficient teaching staff, fortunate financial opportunities, or geographical location, these institutions have risen to places of unusual strength. So powerful have they become that they have little need to depend on the resources of the church for their support. Examples of such institutions would be the University of Chicago, Northwestern University, Wesleyan University, and Carleton College. The boards of control are not always selected from the membership of the church. The presidents of these institutions are quite often men whose church membership is in a denomination other than the one which founded the college.

The teaching of religion is expected in these institutions. Because of more economic resources they often maintain a department of religion which compares favorably with other departments from the standpoint of educational standards. The religious atmosphere may not be of the same sectarian character as in the smaller college, but it may be as wholesome. Usually, there issues from such schools much of the advance thinking and practices of religion.

The independent college. A considerable number of the church-founded colleges of our early American history have gravitated away from church control entirely. These institutions of higher learning are known now as independent colleges or universities. Examples are to be found in Harvard, Yale, and Columbia Universities, Dartmouth and Rutgers Colleges. Their endowment, usually the largest among educational institutions, comes from sources that have no particular connection with the church.

In the beginning these institutions had a dominant religious motive. For instance, at Harvard, in the first century of its existence forty-nine per cent of the graduates at that college fitted themselves for the ministry.[4] Boards of control have no connection with church organizations whatever. Neither are they under the necessity of selecting administrative officers with some stipulated religious faith, nor must they belong to a certain denomination.

The total impression that is gained from the independent university is that it is not antagonistic to the fostering of religion. In fact, they usually have a divinity school as a part of the university. Yet they are decidedly utilitarian, though classical influence reigned in them until very recently. Their divinity schools are manned by some of the best intellects in the religious world. Ordinarily, these schools are most advanced in the religious thinking of the day, although in at least one the spirit of conservatism reigns.

In this connection mention should be made with respect to a growing group of universities that are being fostered by certain cities. They are known as municipal universities. Nine of them exist in the United States. They have no relationship to any church, and their emphasis is entirely secular. The University of Wichita does list several religion courses in its catalogue of this current year.

Schools of religion at State universities and State colleges. State universities for long decades struggled under the handicap of being unable to teach religion. People everywhere looked askance at education without the religious element. The early presidents sought, without making any appearance of it, to establish a denominational balance in the selecting of faculty members. Later this practice was given up and the modern utilitarian emphasis developed with the popularity of the State universities. The emphasis on developing a citizen came to be more and more satisfactory. Those who desired especially that their children should have religious training and influence could send them to a church college.

Still, all was not well with State university training which gave no opportunity for the study of religion. Many citizens of the State understood this. Administrative officers of these institutions came to agree quite generally that education with the rich cultural field of religion left out was something less than that which education should be.

Since the beginning of the present century a rather concerted effort has been made on the part of church leaders with educational vision, along with educational leaders, to establish schools of religion adjacent to or in the university. Varying methods of approach are being used, and different degrees of advancement have been made. The Wesley, Columbus, and Disciple Foundations at the University of Illinois represent one type of effort, the Missouri Bible School at the University of Missouri represents another, while Wesley College at the University of North Dakota is still another. The Union type is represented at the University of Iowa, where the Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish forces are joined with the university in presenting religious instruction. The purpose of all of the score of schools is the same fundamental one of bridging the gap between religion and education at State schools. Experiments of a similar nature are going on in several normal colleges and colleges of agriculture.

This is not to say that all elements of religious instruction have been provided in these State universities and colleges. Such would be far from the truth. These schools have given and now give courses dealing with the subject of religion. But, generally, the emphasis has been on other than the religious phase. The school of religion comes to the State school in order to offer instruction in the one field which State schools are not permitted or qualified to teach.

Courses in the field of religion. The first question that would naturally arise in the minds of those interested is that concerning the courses offered in religion. In general, they may be divided into three main divisions: (1) *Bible*, (2) *Religion*, and (3) *Religious Education*. The Bible courses are those that have to do directly and primarily with the material in the Bible, and also those that bear directly on the Bible as a book of religion or religious instruction. Courses dealing with the following subjects would be included in this division:

Old Testament History.
Study of the Prophets, including Major and Minor Prophets.
Study of the Wisdom Literature.
Study of the Literature of the Intertestamental Period.
New Testament History.
The Teachings of Jesus.
The Life of Jesus.
The Life of Paul and His Writings.
Studies in Church History.
The Bible as Literature.
The Social Ideals and Institutions of the Bible.

Courses in religion may be considered as those that aim to give primary information on the interpretation and application of religion. The following subjects would be represented in such courses:

Psychology of Religion.
History of Religion.
Philosophy of Religion.

Moral Teachings of Religion.

Courses in religious education relate themselves directly to teaching religion. Only courses which bear directly on the principles, practice and methods of religious education are included.

Introduction to Religious Education.

Principles of Religious Education.

Methods of Teaching Religion.

Organization and Administration of Religious Education.

The Curriculum of Religious Education.

To what extent are these courses taught? Obviously, it makes a considerable difference the extent to which these courses are given in each college. If an array of religion courses are listed in the catalogue with little pretense of giving them, then a kind of catalogue purpose has been served. The extent to which religion courses are actually taught would be difficult to determine throughout the whole list of colleges. An intensive study of 15 typical church colleges made recently by the writer revealed the following facts: The 15 colleges gave a total of 568 semester hours in all phases of religion combined; 245 hours of Bible were taught; 165 hours of Religion; and 158 semester hours of Religious Education. The median number of semester hours taught by these colleges was 32, or 16 hours per semester.[5]

In 20 typical church colleges surveyed it was discovered that the median number of hours available in religion for various classes were as follows: Freshmen, 15; Sophomores, 20; Juniors, 26; Seniors, 28. It is to be noted that nearly twice as many hours were devoted to the Seniors as to the Freshmen. Only three colleges were giving such courses to Freshmen. Two of these twenty colleges are giving graduate courses in religious education, one of them providing fifteen hours.

How many students take religion courses? Facts gathered to discover the number of students taking religion indicate that on the average 283 students register for such courses throughout the year in one typical college. Of the total number of students attending 22 typical church colleges 4 per cent only were in training for paid vocations in religion.

Over half of these 283 registrations were in Bible courses; two thirds of the remaining half were in religious education; and the remainder in religion. While the Bible courses hold the center of the stage so far as number of registrations are concerned, it appears that religious education and the psychological, historical, and philosophical study of religion are coming more and more into prominence.

A disturbing element appears in the fact that 96 per cent of the students year by year fail to engage actively in the pursuit of religious knowledge. In the same investigation it was found that 82 per cent of these students are members of a church. Surely, their interest in the study of religion would not cease upon entrance to college if a lively pursuit of information in this field were stimulated in previous days. Another possibility is that through poor teaching and poorly conditioned educational procedure in Sunday school or elsewhere a distaste has been acquired for the subject. It is axiomatic that intellectual interest should be as keen in this field as in any other.

Religious qualities of teachers. It is apparent to all those that are interested in the religious education of youth during college years that the gaining of information concerning religion is what may be called fact education. To discover a "way of living" involves value education. Mere fact education leads to the brush-pile type of life, while value education leads to the development of the tree-life, or organized life.

It is admitted by nearly everyone that back of teaching stands the teacher as a most important feature in the educational process. Character values are involved both in the teacher and those taught. Motives of the teacher, by a process little understood, pass through the channels of information and into the motive structure of the students.

The only method that is available to indicate the religious quality of college teachers is by their church relationship. In a study made by the writer it was found that in 13 typical church colleges 88 per cent of the faculty members of these colleges were church members.

It happened that these thirteen colleges were of one particular denomination. Sixty-seven per cent of the faculty members held membership in the church of the denomination which founded the college. Reports from these and other colleges indicate that some of the contributions of religious teachers are as follows:

1. The positive contents of the Christian religion is presented.

2. The courses are interpretative of religion.

3. The teacher is concerned about making the principles of religion effective in society.

4. The teacher consciously represents the church, which is the agency of organized religion, therefore his interests go deeper into ethical and religious phases of subject matter taught.

It is rightly assumed that religious qualities of the other teachers of the college have their proportionate and positive effect for the religious upbuilding of students' lives. A strong current of testimony to this fact comes from out the college classroom itself.

The influence of religious atmosphere. The statement is sometimes made that religious atmosphere is of chief importance when it comes to judging the religious contribution of a college. The term "religious atmosphere" is used rather indiscriminately. Few can doubt that it has meaning. There has been no method of measurement devised to determine a statement of quantity or quality.

Undoubtedly, religious atmosphere must have its basis in religious intelligence. Religious thinking is found chiefly inside the curricular activities. The voluntary religious organizations give opportunity for emotional release and volitional expression. But these important years are marked chiefly by a rationalization of the religious process. This suggests that thinking and the results of thinking determine much for religion on a college campus.

CHAPTER III

THE DEPARTMENT OF RELIGION

The teaching of religion in colleges is carried on ordinarily in one department. This department is variously named in different institutions. Quite commonly in the past it has been known as the Bible Department. Other designations used are Religious Education or Religion Department. Or, it may be, one of these in combination with such as Sociology, Education, or Missions.

The historic Bible department. The name that has had the longest history with the colleges has been that of Bible Department. This is not difficult to understand in view of the fact that a majority of these institutions came into existence at the time when the Bible in religion was being emphasized to the exclusion of all other factors. The literary and historical study of the Bible formed the basis of procedure in all the early history of the colleges. Hence the name "Bible Department" came to be universally used. In a recent study of twenty-seven typical church colleges fifteen of the departments were still called Bible Departments. This should not be taken to indicate that the only subjects taught are Bible subjects. Such might have been the case in the beginning, but now religious education and religion courses are taught as well.

Combination departments. A practice which is becoming prevalent places Bible, religious education, and religion courses in one department. Not only so, but combination is also made with such subjects as education, sociology, rural leadership, and missions. Twelve of the twenty-seven colleges just referred to make such combinations. Half of these twelve combine Bible with religious education subjects.

There are two distinct reasons that may be advanced for combining subjects as herein noted. The one is academic, and the other is economic. The academic purpose is served in such combinations by the shifting of religious study interest from the Bible to other subjects, such as religious education and religion. These all lie in one general field. The combination with allied subjects, such as education, sociology, and missions, serves an economic purpose and will be discussed in another part of this chapter.

Religious education causes a new problem. A most persistent, recent problem is that of properly grouping religious education courses with those of other courses in the general field of religion. According to some authorities this new and important emphasis in the field bids fair to outstrip the others in interest and practical value. The tendency now seems to be that of regrouping on a functional basis in order to meet the needs of the students.

Some contention is made that religious education courses are essentially method courses, and being of a professional character they should function in a department by themselves. On the other hand, Professor John Dewey is cited in a statement in which he indicates that there is nothing inherent in professional studies which prevents them from being cultural. The important feature is the method and spirit in which the study is carried on.

There are 172 higher institutions in the United States in which courses in religious education are being taught.[6] Sixty-five of the departments in which there is such instruction are called Religious Education Departments. In the 107 other institutions the name was connected with Bible, education, religion, and sociology. Seventeen of the 172 colleges give majors specifically in religious education. It is being strongly suggested that method should not be divorced from content, and that courses dealing with the teaching of religion lose greatly in value unless they are integrally related to a study of the Bible and other religious material.

Perhaps the most logical contention concerning terminology is that if Bible, religious education, and varied allied subjects are to be grouped into one department, the most accurate term for use is Department of Religion.

The religious contribution of chapel exercises. Authorities in church colleges have generally believed that chapel exercises make a contribution to the religious life of the students. Growing out of that belief has been the practice of frequent exercises with required student attendance. Lately this position has been bitterly assailed. The attack has been led most often by student groups. They have contended that the compulsory nature of such an arrangement struck squarely at the principle of freedom which is basic in our religion. Various other complaints have been lodged against the practice, such as, for example, lack of opportunity to worship, time taken up with announcements, many talks dull and uninteresting, and exercises lacking the semblance of religion.

A recent survey of twenty-six typical church colleges with respect to chapel exercises brought forth the following facts: Twenty-four of them reported such exercises from three to six times a week. The other two had chapel twice a week. Of the twenty-six colleges the officers of twenty-one stated that they definitely aimed to make a religious contribution to the students through their chapel exercises. These also stated that they maintained the practice of compulsory chapel attendance. They further declared that they believed that they realized their aim in this regard.

The claims for a religious contribution were made in the following terms: cultivation of rational religious attitudes and habits; creating interest and reverence for sacred principles; giving group and institutional sanctions to religious ideals and practices; and cultivating habits of worship as a normal aspect of daily life. Undoubtedly, there were reasons for such judgments, but no forthcoming data were received which indicated how these college officers arrived at them. Five of the colleges reported that they did not aim to make any religious contribution through the chapel exercises. One returned the statement that their aim was to make a religious contribution, but they failed to do so.

The sum total of all this is somewhat difficult to state. The colonial college routine for chapel service is no more. Current methods of religious thinking affect this chapel problem. The present tendency toward emphasis on worship is positive. But conditions for worship are sadly lacking in too many of such exercises. The social swing in colleges to-day is so dominant that chapel exercises afford an excellent opportunity for social fellowship. On the other hand, college officers feel that this is the one occasion where announcements can be made effectively. Various ideas and plans can be promoted by short talks. Some of this is done in the name of religion, but hasn't the slightest semblance of anything religious in it.

The significant fact to keep in mind is not that we must save the chapel exercises, but that the spirit of religious worship shall be developed in college youth. The tendencies to indifference and disregard for religion are apparent. Sound thinking with respect to religious matters is not as prevalent as it might be. Still, there is a most hopeful search for reality. There is a desire to find an adequate way of living.

A recognition of chapel exercises even as being compulsory would not need to defeat the main results in student worship if high standards mark the arrangement and conduct of the hour. The devitalizing factor seems to enter at the point where lack of arrangement, poor preparation, and no worth-while attitude is expressed on the part of leaders of the exercise.

Voluntary exercises are especially attractive at the point of creating successful features through student co-operation, such as chorus choir, other forms of special music, and occasionally students as presiding officers.[7]

The nature and number of courses. The character and amount of work given in the Religion Department is determined by four factors: (1) Traditional emphasis of the department. (2) The religious nature of the group giving financial and moral support to the college. (3) The religious nature of courses in other departments. (4) The religious nature and thought of the teacher or teachers of religion.

Departments of religion have the habit of gaining certain emphases. For instance, Bible courses were given early prominence in all of them. Courses from time to time have been added to or taken away from the list offered. It sometimes occurs that courses serving little purpose or creating slight interest on the part of students remain in the offering. When other departments have customarily given certain religious courses there has been no need for duplicating such work in the Religion Department.

The religious nature of the people giving financial and moral support to the college has often shown itself in the maintenance of courses designed to cultivate the conservative viewpoint in religion. Or, to the other extreme, it might tend to cultivate the liberal trend in religion.

Perhaps more influential than any other factor is the teacher himself. The tendency of his thought has more to do in determining the nature of the teaching than any other factor.

The number of courses given in any Religion Department depends on the number of teachers and whether they are giving all of their time to the teaching of religion, whether the college is operated on the semester or quarter plan, and, also, the kind of interest traditionally manifested in the college toward religion.

Of the 23 typical church colleges which the writer surveyed with respect to the teaching of religion, it was discovered that the median number of courses given was 8. The highest number given by any one of them was 37 and the lowest number 3. Over half of these courses were in Bible; the next largest number were religion courses; while the smallest number were the vocational courses in religious education.

The Bible still holds a prominent position as a subject of study in the Christian religion. Within recent years, however, a change has been noticed. Fewer courses in Bible are being given, while more and more students have been interested in the historical, psychological, and sociological study of religion. Moreover, the vocational courses in religious education have leaped into prominence in the last quarter of a century. They constitute nearly a quarter of the offerings in the 23 colleges.

Of the 196 courses in religion given by these 23 typical church colleges, only 10, or about 5 per cent, are required courses. In one of the colleges 8 hours in Bible, Psychology, or Philosophy are required for graduation. The attitude of the students, so far as can be discovered, is not favorable toward such a requirement. However, with these colleges that make the requirement it has become a tradition.

There are two arguments generally given for the maintenance of such a requirement. First, that religion is such an important field of culture that no student should be allowed to graduate without at least being introduced to it. Second, that in the case of church colleges there is a distinct duty, by reason of their origin, to see to it that religion be taught, even though it be necessary to make the courses required. The nature of this argument is strengthened by the fact that State schools and State requirements for teachers must disregard religious instruction.

The main argument against such a requirement is that at the heart of religion is an element of freedom, and anything compulsory in nature negates this central element. Furthermore, religion should stand on its own merits in the elective list of the college curriculum and hence draw students on the basis of their own selection.

That the present practice in these colleges tends toward the elimination of required courses in religion is apparent. How extensively religion is being taught is another important question.

A total number of 6,806 registrants were in the 196 courses of the 23 church colleges investigated by the writer. On the average there were 34 registrants for each religion course. There is, to be sure, a considerable variation in the numbers of students registered for these courses. Being new, the religious education courses, more often than not, drew less than 10 registrations. Very often the religion courses had such small numbers also. The Bible courses as a rule ranged much higher in number of registrations, often 40 and 50, sometimes 60 and 70; the highest number reported in any class was 111.

According to these figures, it would appear that religion courses have, on the average, as many students registered per class as is permissible by standardizing agencies such as the North Central Association.

Relation to other departments. Functionally, the Religion Department correlates its work with other departments in the regular manner. There are no differences in this department which cause it to be subject to special rulings. The nature of its activities varies in no particular that would necessitate different functional arrangements with other departments.

Courses in religion given in other departments, such as history, education, or psychology, are recognized as regular work in religion by the department and by the college. They usually fulfill any religion requirement needed for graduation.

From the functional viewpoint the Religion Department presents two necessities: First, the need of maintaining high academic standards in the department. There is a tendency in some quarters to bring into these departments as instructors those who have had ministerial or ecclesiastical experience, but who are not specifically fitted for educational work. And, second, the need of having a wholesome, scholarly viewpoint of religion presented. This does not entail a continual prying into departmental activities by the administrative officer, but, rather, a careful scrutiny of the general character of the instructor and his teaching before he becomes a member of the faculty.

Administratively, there remains the twofold problem: First, organizing the department along such lines that the work may proceed, from the standpoint of educational efficiency, on a par with the other departments in the college. Secondly, that the constituency be assured that in this department the work will not only meet their desires as to sound teaching in religion, but also meet the academic standards commonly required in other collegiate fields.

CHAPTER IV

THE CURRICULUM OF RELIGION

THE *raison d'etre* for church colleges has been their religious objective. It has been assumed that at the heart of such colleges there has been such piety and zeal that in a certain definite sense education and religion become unified.

The realm of nature has been secularized. Scientific method, once supervised by theology in the colonial colleges, now advances empirically under its own power. The revolutionary effect of the scientific faith on religion to-day is not in its new view of the universe, but its new view of religion. According to certain conceptions religion itself has been "naturalized," if not secularized.

The effects of this change are noticeable. Religious sanctions and theological requirements no longer receive a major emphasis in the college educational process. Therefore, present courses in the field of religion are a clearer index to the total religious impact of the college curriculum than could possibly have been the case in previous decades.

It is quite apparent, as said before, that the chief stress is being laid on the literary study of the Bible. Increasingly there is a more extensive study of the Bible from the social and educational viewpoint. The following data from the curricula of the 23 colleges previously referred to indicate the possible trends in these connections. These 23 colleges gave 102 courses in Bible. The aims for these courses were reported under the following seven heads, the number of courses using the aim being indicated also: (1) historical and literary (81); (2) to cultivate personal religion (56); (3) instruction in religious doctrines (27); (4) to conserve and develop religious faith (63); (5) guidance in conduct (53); (6) vocational guidance (20); (7) preprofessional training for ministers (45). That is, of the 102 courses four fifths have a historical or literary aim. One half of the courses aim to cultivate personal religion. Only one quarter had the aim of instructing in religious doctrines. The reports show that nearly two thirds of these 102 courses had as their aim the conservation and development of religious faith. There were in the reports 345 expressions of aim for the 102 religion courses, making on the average three aims for each course.

It is to be noted that the historical-literary aim was expressed by far the largest number of times. The vocational guidance aim was expressed the smallest number of times. To make a clear distinction between the "cultural" and "professional" is out of the question in these expressions of aim. The fact that the historical-literary aim is still pre-eminent may be interpreted as indicating that the cultural purpose is still predominant. Yet the professional trend indicated by forty-five expressions of aim is no less certain and definite.

Marked differences in emphasis in religious teaching exist among teachers. These differences often run back to the social soils which produced the individuals. The crowding and jostling of a busy age with its multiplied processes and responsibilities calls for a high degree of specialization. The rapid development of vocational courses in religious education during the last quarter of a century shows the educational emphasis in the field of religion.

Teachers and their training. The type of instruction varies in accordance with the extent of preparation which the teachers possess. This academic and professional equipment is, all things being considered, a fair index of their efficiency.

The data secured from 26 colleges indicated 75 teachers were giving instruction in religion.[8] The data further show that over one third of the religion departments in these 26 colleges have one teacher giving full time to the teaching of such subjects; also, that in the instances where there is but one man in the department, the courses taught are in Bible.

The degree or degrees earned by the teachers. Thirteen of the 26 colleges have religion teachers possessing the Doctor of Philosophy degree. These same 13 colleges reported that they have other teachers of religion with the Master of Arts degree. Nine of the prevailing graduate degrees for such teachers was a Master of Arts degree along with the Bachelor of Divinity degree. Twenty-four of the 26 colleges have religion teachers with earned degrees in theology. Five of the colleges reporting represented the Doctor of Divinity degree as an earned degree. It appears at present as if the strong theological emphasis of a generation ago carries over into the present training of teachers of religion. This is shown by the fact that the majority of degrees held by the teachers of religion in the 26 colleges are theological. In 19 of the 26 church colleges from which data were secured it is shown that some of the faculty members of the department of religion did some if not all of their graduate work in graduate schools of their own denomination. In four instances teachers hold degrees from institutions in which they are teaching.

Church membership of the religion teachers. In the study above referred to data concerning 13 of the colleges of one particular denomination were selected with regard to the church membership of the teachers. This means all of the faculty members. It was discovered that in the median college 88 per cent of the faculty members were members of some church or other; that 67 per cent were members of the church of the supporting denomination. Twelve per cent of the faculty members in these 13 colleges do not state that they are members of any church. No evidence is available to prove that the members of this group are not members of some church. However, it seems fair to assume that in nearly every case the fact of church membership would be made known during their teaching relationship. The tendency appears to be that the larger the institution and the longer the faculty list, the less percentage of church membership in the church of the supporting group. The colleges with the smaller faculties have the larger per cent of church membership within the denomination.[9]

No method of measurement has been devised for indicating the religious status of the teachers. The assumption is made that the teachers in the departments of religion are of high religious character. Personal knowledge with respect to the religious character of over half of these seventy-five teachers justifies the writer in this assumption. That they vary greatly in individual initiative, teaching method, and all of the various personality qualities is to be taken for granted. And that such differences are reflected in teaching results must also be taken for granted.

Teachers of Religious Education. A recent study of Religious Education secured data concerning 207 professors and instructors in this special field. Of this number 34 professors and instructors are full-time teachers of religious education. In other centers than Northwestern University, Boston University, Hartford School of Religious Education, University of Chicago, and perhaps one or two others, it is evidently unusual to have a professor devoting full time to the theory and practice of teaching religion.

Two thirds of those teaching undergraduate courses in religious education have professional rank. Eighty-six per cent of the total number have earned degrees beyond the baccalaureate; 60 per cent hold master's degrees; 27 per cent hold doctor's degrees. The majority of the teachers in this field have come into their work with a considerable amount of theological training.

The possession of the Ph.D. degree may not be indicative of specialization for the teaching of religious education, as the degree may have been obtained in fields other than religious education. Complete training in theology does not appear to guarantee efficiency in the educational field. Many of the older men teaching religious education have gained a considerable of their training from experience rather than from graduate study. Some were trained for work in the field of general education. While such experience is of great value, no one can doubt that the best preparation comes from combining experience with study under competent leaders.

The major. The common administrative means for administering courses in religion is the major. Survey-ing the catalogues of 293 church colleges, it was found that 191 provided a major in religion.[10] While some permit a major in Religious Education alone, the most common practice is to permit a major in the general field of religion.

The courses recommended for a major in Religious Education were set forth by the Joint Committee of the Religious Education Association and the Sunday School Council of Evangelical Denominations in 1921. The list of courses, together with the number of semester hours, is given as follows:

Name of Courses	*Semester Hours*
Bible (Content Courses)	6
Bible (Curriculum Values)	3
The Christian Religion	3
Genetic Psychology	3
Introduction to Religious Education	3
Curriculum of Religious Education	2
Methods of Teaching Religion	4
History of Religious Education	3
Organization and Administration of R. E.	3

In a study of 27 typical church colleges 20 reported comparing the number of religion courses with all of the other semester courses given in the colleges. It was found that they amounted to 6.7 per cent of the total number. When translated into semester hours the average number is 31 per institution. One college gives only

18 hours, while another gives as many as 95 hours in Religion. It was found in 20 colleges that of the courses offered in this field 41 per cent are in Bible, 30 per cent are in Religion, and 29 per cent are in Religious Education. Bible courses still hold a dominant position according to these figures. The average number of semester hours offered in Bible in the 20 church colleges is largest in the Junior class group, being 12.5; while the Freshmen average only 4.5. The largest average number of hours offered in Religion for any class is 6.1, offered to the Senior class. The largest average number of hours offered to any class is 10.5 hours in Religious Education, being offered to the Senior group.

Degrees and credit. Courses in Religion in most of the schools count on a major toward the older established degrees or toward the newer of a nonreligious or religious educational nature. The A.B. degree is the most common one given toward which religion courses are accredited. In the above-mentioned survey it was discovered that of the 191 colleges providing a major in the field of Religion 183 permit a major toward the A.B. degree. The B.S., Ph.B., and Ed.B. were degrees toward which the religion courses might count in a few other cases.

Three institutions report that they grant the degree of Bachelor of Religious Education. This practice is of recent origin. The Bachelor of Theology (Th.B.), Bachelor of Religion (B.R.), and Bachelor of Sacred Literature are being given as college degrees, permitting a specialization in religion.

That there is a marked tendency in present higher education to create newer degrees intended to be descriptive of the type of specialization there can be no question. The tendency is beginning to show in the field of religion. On the other hand, there is a strong opposition to this movement; the grounds for opposition being that the older degrees, such as the A.B., constitute a better recognized and more thoroughly scientific basis for procedure.

A number of colleges give certificates or diplomas for undergraduate work in religion. These awards usually represent some portion of a college course. A college may offer courses leading to a one- and two-year certificate in Religious Education. There is a practice, quite prevalent in the South, of denominations granting certificates upon the completion of designated requirements. Fourteen colleges of one denomination reported such an arrangement. In the instance of one college in Ohio an arrangement has been made whereby credit is granted toward the State certificate by the State Board of Education for work done in religion, including that done in week-day schools of religion.

Textbooks used in teaching religion. The study of religion as we know it at present arose out of a background of theological debate and linguistic requirements.

This is plainly shown in the curricula of the colonial colleges. The study of Greek and Latin, Wollebuis' *Divinity*, and Ames' *Medulla of Theology*, was the chief consideration to the early Harvard and Yale students.

Following this there came a time when a narrow evangelistic aim dominated the religious teachings of the colleges. Men diligently sought texts in the Bible to support the claims of salvation. Nearly all of the curricular activity was in the realm of memorization of the Bible and searching out passages that supported the theological views of the times.

At present the aim in religious teaching seems to have shifted to the literary-historical emphasis, along with certain ethical and social trends. No attempt will be made to give a complete survey of the textbooks used in the colleges in the field of religion. In truth, no such definite survey has been made. Yet in the study of 27 typical church colleges it was found that textbooks such as the following are being used in the field:

Athearn, *The Indiana Survey of Religious Education* (2 vols.).
Betts, *The Curriculum of Religious Education.*
Betts and Hawthorne, *Method in Teaching Religion.*
Coe, *Education in Religion and Morals.*
Coe, *Social Theory of Religious Education.*
Cope, *Organizing the Church School.*

Cope, *Religious Education in the Church.*

Brown, *A History of Religious Education in Recent Times.*

Stout, *Organization and Administration of Religious Education.*

Hartshorne, *Childhood and Character.*

Diffendorfer, *Missionary Education in Home and School.*

Bower, *The Curriculum of Religious Education.*

Soares, *Religious Education.*

Barclay, *The Principles of Religious Teaching.*

Emme and Stevick, *Principles of Religious Education.*

Rall, *New Testament History.*

Ottley, *A Short History of the Hebrews.*

Vollmer, *A Modern Student's Life of Christ.*

Bailey and Kent, *History of the Hebrew Commonwealth.*

Wood and Grant, *The Bible as Literature.*

Kent, *Life and Teachings of Jesus.*

Gilbert, *Life of Jesus.*

Rhees, *Life of Paul.*

Ramsay, *The Church in the Roman Empire.*

Smith, *Old Testament History.*

Smith, *The Religion of the Old Testament.*

Smith, *The Historical Geography of the Holy Land.*

Chamberlain, *The Hebrew Prophets.*

Gilbert, *Christianity in the Apostolic Age.*

Eiselen, *Prophecy and the Prophets.*

Eiselen, *The Christian View of the Old Testament.*

Dods, *The Bible, Its Origin and Nature.*

Fowler, *A History of the Literature of Ancient Israel.*
Walker, *A History of the Christian Church.*
Laufer, *The Bible.*
Smyth, *How We Got Our Bible.*
Barton, *The Religions of the World.*
Hopkins, *The History of Religions.*
Moore, *History of Religions* (2 vols.).
Menzies, *History of Religion.*
Soper, *The Religions of Mankind.*
Ellwood, *The Reconstruction of Religion.*
Gallaway, *The Philosophy of Religion.*
Pratt, *The Religious Consciousness.*
Ames, *Psychology of Religious Experience.*
Leuba, *A Psychological Study of Religion.*
James, *Varieties of Religious Experience.*
Hickman, *Introduction to the Psychology of Religion.*
Mahoney, *The Religious Mind.*
Niebuhr, *Does Civilization Need Religion?*
Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct.*

In the technical field of religious education a recent study by Alderton, Clapp, Hanna, and others devotes a section to the evaluation of textbooks in present use in the colleges. From 150 colleges they received returns of 307 titles that dealt specifically with religious education. Few of these books are written for undergraduate use. The most of them seem to be fitted for graduate and non-academic purposes. The authors state: "Of the 307 titles on religious education reported, 76 deal with methods, 42 with special groups, 34 with skills like storytelling and dramatics, 24 with organization and administration, and 11 with theory or principle. The rest of the titles were divided among curriculum, psychology, biblical interpretation, and history." Many colleges use a variety of references rather than a single text. Some instructors evidently believe that the textbook method is passing. Summarizing, it seems correct to say that there is an insufficient number of textbooks for use in undergraduate work in this special field.

As a general observation, what has been said for the special field of religious education remains true for the whole field of religion. There seems to be much writing in the field of theology, Bible and religion, but a considerable proportion of the textbooks are for graduate study or else for general public use. Few of the volumes are constructed with the specific purpose of being used as textbooks in the college classroom. Whether or not the changing viewpoint in religion, with its varying educational, social, and scientific emphasis, will bring more textbooks into being remains to be seen. Unless this should come to pass the students taking courses in religion will continue to cast about in libraries for reference material in volumes not designed for such special study.

CHAPTER V

STUDENT RELATIONSHIP TO THE STUDY OF RELIGION

The results shown by the studies. Strange as it may seem, while one of the expressed purposes of colleges has been and is to train in religion, students of the present generation are not accepting such training in large numbers. In a study recently made it was found that 4 per cent of the total number of students enrolled in 22 church colleges are members of religious organizations, such as volunteer band, Oxford Club, Student Fellowship and Life Service Clubs. It was also discovered that of the total number of students 4 per cent were in training for paid vocations in the church. Indications point to the fact that essentially the same people make up the personnel of these two groups.

Over 80 per cent of the number that train for paid vocations in the church prepare themselves to be pastors, directors of religious education, and teachers in week-day schools of religion. Twelve per cent plan to enter social service which has a definite religious motivation. Three per cent train for the purpose of becoming professors of religion in higher institutions. A disturbing element appears in the fact that 96 per cent of the students fail to engage in the pursuit of religious knowledge for any of these purposes.

Another disconcerting element appears in the fact that a vast number of students may and do pass through their four years in many church colleges and fail to have any touch with the courses in religion whatever. That courses may be poorly taught in some instances or be lacking in any way is beside the point. So, too, are some other courses in other departments of the colleges. The fact is that to a considerable degree the church colleges, through one defect or another, are failing to make the intellectual phases of religion attractive or effective in the minds of a large number of college students.

The 22 church colleges that reported indicated a median student church membership of 82 per cent. If such church membership has the significance which it seems fair to attach to it, then interest in the courses setting forth the function and nature of religion as related to experience would seem natural and logical.

It was found by returns received in a recent study made of 674 Seniors in 23 colleges that 44 per cent of the men and 55 per cent of the women attend church regularly.[11] Changes in life-work plans during college were recorded by 34 per cent of the men and 42 per cent of the women. The most favored callings to which they turned were business, engineering, agriculture, law, teaching, journalism, and social work. The statement is made to show the fact that no mention is made of any students turning to specific vocations in the field of religion. According to the authors, the study shows: "A considerable confusion and lack of fundamental education on religious and ethical issues; . . . there is need to reconsider the place of religion in higher education. . . . Should not undergraduates be given a fuller education in the appreciation of values and of the controlling principles supplied by religion and ethics?"

In the 22 colleges reporting data relative to student enrollment in religious education courses in the academic year the median number of students taking Bible was 111. The median number taking religion courses (Psychology, Philosophy, History or Religion, etc.) was 32. The median number of course registrations in the technical courses of religious education in the same colleges was 64. This shows that there was a total of 207 course registrations in the whole field in the median of these 22 colleges. According to these figures, 63 per cent of the students in this median college took no courses in the field of religion during the year 1923–24, evidencing a marked lack of interest in courses of religion. In a few instances there may have been compulsory courses given; however, as has been indicated, these cases are not numerous.

Underlying attitudes. Students in colleges to-day have a large place for idealism in their lives. There is much groping for a satisfying philosophy of life. That they find it difficult to construct a sufficiently enlarged concept of God is apparent. But the number indicating disbelief and skepticism is noticeably small, 1 per cent of men and 1 per cent of women.[12]

In a large denominationally founded university in the State of New York, the Personnel Research Federation of that institution found by a religious survey which they conducted in their university that of the 4,000 students enrolled 13 per cent favored agnosticism and 5 per cent expressed favor for extreme mechanistic and atheistic philosophy. The rest, 82 per cent, expressed a rather orthodox belief in God.

Professor Rudolph M. Binder, sociologist of New York University, made a religious survey recently of the students in sociology, economics and government in that university. The three outstanding results of the investigation were these, according to Professor Binder:

1. Most of the students lost their faith before entering college.

2. A large number of the students attribute their loss of faith to the study of evolution.

3. An extraordinarily large percentage declared their disbelief in life after death.

A few of the figures of the survey will give point to the above-mentioned results. Seventy-six per cent of the 432 students reporting believed in some kind of Deity, while 24 per cent denied any belief in such a being. Only 25 per cent of the 408 answering the question of belief in life after death declared any belief in immortality; the 306, or 75 per cent, indicated a definitely negative answer to the question. Only 35 per cent indicated that they got their moral ideas from religion. In answer to the question, "Do you pray?" 51 per cent indicated that they prayed, 49 per cent that they did not pray at all. The students in these classes represented different Christian denominations, but also a large percentage of Jews and a few students from China and Japan.

In another connection Professor Binder has made an illuminating statement that serves an explanatory purpose at this point: "He [the student] is dynamic, changing, getting new points of view, acquiring more numerous and more refined wants; the system [education] is static, confining and circumscribing; it is all of this and more because it is based on the conception that the beast in man must be tamed and controlled. It takes a negative instead of a positive view of man. The theological view of man as a rebel and totally depraved by original sin is still with us."*[12]

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* *Major Social Problems.* Reprinted by permission of the author.

CHAPTER VI

LIMITATIONS IN THE PROCESS

Colleges like other social institutions have inherent limitations. These limitations operate to cut down the efficiency of the various departmental activities.

Economic aspects of teaching religion in colleges. Money relates itself to every known enterprise of the colleges. This is realized more keenly in colleges where there is difficulty in meeting financial obligations. Four methods are employed to meet expenses: general endowment, general endowment and special endowment, special endowment alone, and special gifts.

The median endowment of a group of 18 colleges recently reporting in a survey was $1,000,000. The annual income from the median endowment is about $30,000. It was discovered that in order to meet their yearly obligations the administrative officers of the college must raise approximately $62,000, or more than twice as much as came from the endowment for the year.

Now these 18 colleges indicated that they spent on the average $4,285 for instruction in religion. This amount would care adequately for no more than one full-time teacher, together with other departmental expenditures. The methods used by these 18 typical church colleges in financing the costs of teaching religion were 3; general endowment and special endowment in 50 per cent of the cases, general endowment only in 44 per cent, and special gifts in 6 per cent of the cases.

It was found in this same study that the percentage of expenditures for religion compared to the amount for total annual expenses was 3.1; the range in percentage among these colleges being from .5 per cent to 6 per cent.

Let us look carefully into these data already noted. We have found that there are sufficient funds in the average college to care for one instructor in religion, along with caring for his departmental needs on the basis of present college salaries. We observed also that only one half of the group of colleges surveyed show the teacher of religion giving full time to the teaching of his subjects. In the other half the religion teacher gives one half to one third of his time teaching other subjects, such as education, sociology, or psychology.

The fact is, then, that the 3.1 per cent of money expended in these departments is reduced one third to one half in half of the cases. In other words, not so much religion is being taught in these departments as might appear on the surface. There seems to be no hesitancy on the part of administrative officers in some colleges to make the chair in the religion department a sort of a "settee" whereby numerous other subjects may be crowded in and taught with the money that should go to sound instruction of students in the cultural field of religion.

Common observation would support the fact that more money is gained from church constituencies for church colleges on the assumption that it goes to foster religious instruction than any other phase of college activity. Yet it is quite evident that the bulk of the money gained thus will never be used directly for such a purpose. Allowance, of course, must be made for the fact that almost everything about a college can be made to contribute toward the religious life of the student.

The presidents of fifteen church colleges returned data on proposed plans for improvement in the departments of religion. Eight of them stated that the first item in their plan of improvement would be to add teachers to the faculties of such departments. Three others stated that their plan would be to build endowment for the religion department. Taken together, this means that two thirds of these colleges need financial support for their departments of religion. Apparently, that which was the chief corner stone of college structure and purpose in their early years has been rejected by the later builders.

The race to compete with other fast-growing colleges and universities, including State schools, has compelled the emphasis in many institutions to be directed in other channels than that of religion. "The difficulty of financing church colleges is a matter of common knowledge. The competition with State schools is sharp, and for the most part the church schools are not meeting the competition altogether successfully. The direct control of secular education has largely passed to the State, so far as Protestantism is concerned."[13] Yet, strangely enough, there seems to have been a diminishing emphasis on the very phase of their life that would seem to make them distinctive, and for which they were particularly created.

Other evidence of financial limitations. Quite recently a careful and illuminating survey of the current educational expenditure for 17 Disciples colleges has been made.[14] The results show that the income received from students represents 61 per cent of the current educational expenditure, and the income received from endowment represents 27 per cent of the current educational expenditure for the median college of these seventeen. The income received from the students approximately equals the expenditures of these institutions for instructional salaries.

That means that there is an annual deficit to be made up of 12 per cent of the total amount of expenditures for that year. The college must seek special gifts from churches and individuals. It would appear that the operation of the various departments stands in danger of being limited. In a previous chapter it has been pointed out that the average college devotes about 3 per cent of its annual expenditures to the religion department. That there is need of a larger teaching force in these departments has already been shown.

Status of the teachers. The conclusion has been drawn that approximately three out of four professors in religious education in American colleges have had a complete or partial theological training. Theology is an ancient study. It has ever tended to hold to qualities of its ancientness. Studies made of theological seminaries show their conservative tendencies as educational institutions.[15] At the same time the development in the Departments of Religion in colleges has been toward liberalizing the studies and meeting the demands of religion in a living and swiftly moving age. The tendency of the theologically minded teachers is to present an established code to which students should subscribe. There has been increasing doubt, however, as to the workableness of codes which disregard the net of social circumstances in which modern students find themselves. The test of practical experience has not been applied with much that is taught. To mix this high religion with the muck of the world would be to apply the acid test of modern experience.

Few who understand the problems of religion would doubt that the tendency of the theologically minded men of the past has been toward a high assertiveness concerning large subjects where little actual knowledge existed. If it has been true that sermonically minded preachers have found their way into religion departments, it should cause no surprise. Until recently, special fitness for such a teaching position could be supplied by a theological training. To any who have given the matter study a momentous change has taken place. The spirit of free inquiry has at last entered the field of religion. There is now nothing so sacrosanct that it may not be subject to investigation. The old method of superimposing a doctrinal structure is gone. The study of religion has no vested interest in particular formulations of truth, nor is it committed to certain ancient phrases.

Of prime importance is the study of the nature and function of religion. By invention and discovery man has advanced in the last twenty years further in certain directions than in the thousand years preceding. This has brought a whirling confusion into the already socially complex world. New and unprecedented demands are thereby made on religion. It does not do to announce old statements of salvation unless a fresh and vital interpretation of it can be made in terms of the world in which we now live. The problems of the intelligent control of unemployment, machine industrialism, family life, economic distribution of goods, and racial prejudices are staggering in their immensity. Religion cannot disassociate itself from these. The teacher of religion cannot fail to see that more and more the elements of his field are with certainty and rapidity coming to grips with the everyday problems of life. The day of serene, closet-study of religion is past. Religion is in for a prolonged season of buffeting on the high seas of common life. The real teacher must know the reactions that take place in this buffeting and be able to accurately describe results.

This cannot be done by giving learned lectures on the lore of the past. The humanists of the sixteenth century tried to use the Latin language to foster useful knowledge in their time. Their successors are found occasionally in the present type of teacher who is marked by Bible exclusiveness. That is, for every immediate and pressing modern social problem, the Bible, an Oriental book, must be made to produce an answer. Here, again, the demand upon religion is greater than can be witnessed in its literature. Life moves on. Adjustments must be made. Teachers sometimes come to fear freedom—to fear the unfixed state of mind. Ofttimes they are not as courageous as the man of science, rather at times becoming opinionated with the "in-the-saddle" way of thinking. If such limitations do not characterize the majority of the teachers of religion, it surely is true of such a considerable number that the progress of religion is noticeably hindered.

Kinds of administrators needed for religion. Many church colleges find themselves in situations of great stress and strain financially. They have almost invariably wanted a man for president who could carry this financial burden and at the same time offer a high degree of religious leadership.

Still another main qualification has been educational equipment and statesmanship. The practice has been to turn to the ministry of the denomination and make the selection there. Such a procedure has not proven to be of unvarying success. Sometimes in securing a president who can meet the financial needs the religious or educational needs suffer. Or if the religious and educational needs are met, the financial program is sacrificed. If the financial program can be managed by another officer than the president, then the religious and educational factors are the chief ones concerned.

The tendency seems to be that as the influence of church control relaxes in a college less strictness is manifested with respect to religious matters. There seems to be at the same time an increasing demand for high educational qualifications in the chief administrative officer.

Undoubtedly, there is need of a good balance between the two qualifications—religious and educational. Two particular reasons appear which make it hard to obtain men of this stamp. *First,* if the unusual strength of a man in the religious field has been discovered, he has, no doubt, been promoted to some position of influence and high salary which it is hard for the college to match.

Second, if the emphasis is educational, the same difficulty is confronted with the added element that the individual may not meet the religious qualification at all.

Low salary is a constant snag in the obtaining of administrators as well as teachers. Economic pressure upon men adequately to care for their families has never been so great as now.

Better equipped men are often not attracted to college administration or teaching because they realize the economic strain involved. The Yale study of teachers' salaries demonstrated that college teaching is only a part-time profession, the income from which must be eked out by other work if the family budget is to be balanced.[16]

Teachers of religion may bear the brunt of maintaining standards necessary to the life of the college. Certain it is their activities will be rather closely observed, not alone by the administrative officer, but by those who think in terms of the whole church and have a voice in the committee rooms.

Limitations of library facilities. In the survey made by the writer data were sought from 27 church colleges relative to the number of volumes maintained in their libraries on the subject of religion. At the same time information was sought regarding the number of religious periodicals carried in the libraries. Nineteen out of the 27 colleges returned data regarding each of the two questions. It was found that the median college library carried 1,478 volumes in the field of religion: Six hundred and thirty-three in Bible, 750 in Religion, and 95 in Religious Education. It is known that the religion sections of the libraries of a considerable number of these colleges are heavily stocked with volumes of purely theological character; gifts many times from some minister's library. Because of their ancient character many of these contribute little to the study of the nature and function of present day religion.

If the median library has only 95 volumes in the technical field of religious education, the chances for the well-rounded development of the work in this field are not good.

The median college, according to the reports, subscribes for six standard religious periodicals, such as Religious Education, Journal of Religion, Biblical Review, Ecclesiastical Review, and those of similar nature. Some colleges of the nineteen are only taking two such periodicals. In this case it would seem that these colleges are not furnishing an adequate amount of current information for students who may wish to specialize in the study of religion.

CHAPTER VII

TEACHING RELIGION AT STATE UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES

UNTIL consideration is given to the religious instruction in State schools there will be no complete understanding of collegiate activities in this field. The present chapter has for its purpose the statement of conditions and tendencies of religious instruction in such institutions. The statements will be based on the writer's survey of ten schools of religion located at State school centers and also upon his experience in teaching and directing religious activities of one such school.

Religious significance of the rise of State universities. The civic aim in education which gave rise to the State university must be kept in mind. Sectarian fears and prejudices, the past history of religious bigotry and strife, the opposition to any form of a state church were impelling ideas which drove the early educators toward a free, tax-supported, nonsectarian type of higher education. A century has passed since Thomas Jefferson by dint of hard struggle was able to secure the means from the people of Virginia and mold the public sentiment of the commonwealth to establish the first State university. Its doors were opened in 1825.

Opposition to this movement was bitter and acrimonious. The church forces were unable to see how they could part from the age-old custom of giving religious instruction along with the teaching of the other disciplines. Jefferson suggested even then, to those who assailed his plan, that they establish a school of religion near to the University of Virginia and thus take advantage of library and other facilities. This they did not do. Yet the decades that have passed proved the wisdom of this suggestion. The church forces countered by erecting their own colleges here and there east and west of the Alleghanies and on into the West. Samples of such colleges we have been considering in the past chapters.

Fortunes of religion in State-controlled education. Time was not so long ago when State universities and colleges were considered godless institutions. Such statements are rarely heard any more. Its basis, in fact, was never justified. The venom in that stinging indictment came, undoubtedly, from prejudiced sources of denominational bigotry and shortsightedness. Ecclesiastical authorities felt shortened in their power of control and influence over these doughty young institutions that forged their way into the life of American society. By the opening of the twentieth century some forty State universities had been built, and most of these institutions had become well developed and equipped. To-day nearly all of these institutions count their students by thousands. A number of them have a faculty list as long as the total student list in some church colleges. These universities and colleges are supported by taxes voted by the people of the State. The rapid development and growing favor of the State schools, especially in the West, is one of the outstanding phenomena of the last quarter century.

The question that will not down in the midst of all this State dominance of higher education is the lack of religious instruction in the State universities and colleges. There has been no questioning of the efficiency of these institutions from the standpoint of their high grade of instruction in the various secular disciplines. But how were they to consider themselves as giving a full universal training while leaving out the rich field of religion? The problem was left unsolved until very recent years. This brings us to the consideration of the present movement for teaching religion in connection with State universities and colleges.

Religious needs of students at State schools. Although it is true that a vigorous reaction set in against the State universities in the beginning years of their existence, time has softened this resistance. The opportunity to express opposition lay in the creation and sustaining of the colleges builded on private foundations. So changed was the criticism by the closing years of the nineteenth century that the words concerning these schools were pitched in a lowered key. The admirable adaptation of the State schools to the utilitarian purposes of the age was too evident to be disputed. The fruits of their labors were already apparent in the mechanical and industrial arts of the period.

Yet a new situation was arising. Among the thousands of youths that were making their way to these State schools each year there was a large number who came from homes whose members were numbered among the loyal body of some church group. In a survey of 21 State universities and colleges in 1923–24 it was found that in the median institution 66 per cent of the students were members of some church; and further, that 19 per cent more expressed a preference for some particular church. This means that in the median university 85 per cent of the students have a definite relationship or interest in the church. Seventy per cent of the teachers in the State universities were members of some church.

Apparently, a great mass of people interested in higher institutions are quite willing, though church members, to send their sons and daughters to State schools. It turns out that many ministers' sons and daughters even have found their way to these schools. What does this mean? Are these people disloyal to the institutions of their religious faith? No, they have not suddenly become irreligious; neither have they lost sight of true values if we may judge by recent activities at these State schools.

The awakening of the churches to the religious needs of students at State schools. Near the beginning of this period of rapid rise in student attendance at State schools there was started a movement which has for its purpose the development of religious education at State schools. In different ways the movement took shape at such State school centers as Illinois, Wisconsin, North Dakota, Missouri, Iowa, and others. These were random efforts at first, yet they indicated that a tide had set in which favored a constructive movement toward religion. Ministers of local churches in the State school communities have often become the initiating personality for this new emphasis. If the several denominations were similarly disposed, the ministers of the several churches co-operating developed the opportunity for the religious culture of the students.

General boards in the churches became interested and began to think of these State centers as most likely places in which to do constructive work in Christian education. In eight schools of religion reporting the frequency with which the different denominations are represented in doing work at State schools it was discovered that the Baptists were represented 5 times; the Catholics, 2; Christians, 3; Congregational, 4; Disciples, 5; Episcopal, 2; Methodist Episcopal, 7; Presbyterian, 7 times. This would indicate that the various churches have awakened to the needs of students at State schools.

The attitude of the presidents of State universities and colleges toward schools of religion is interesting at this point. Eighteen of these officers reporting held an attitude entirely favorable to such schools. Sixteen of the eighteen statements filed indicated that the presidents were both favorable and practically aggressive in fostering the interests of such a school. None indicated an attitude of indifference toward them.

Nature of the schools of religion at State institutions. The question of the nature of the schools of religion can best be answered by showing the character of the ten schools that have been studied for this monograph. Three types of organization are found: *First*, the interdenominational or union type; *second*, the federated denominational; and, *third*, the separate denominational type.

The interdenominational or union type is formed and maintained by several religious denominations. It is a single unit operating strictly on a common basis in the religious educational interests of each of the denominations involved. By the federated denominational is meant a type of organization formed and maintained by several religious denominations each operating from its own base, but united in certain common activities of the program at the university. The separate denominational school of religion is formed and maintained by one denomination and is operated according to its own individual purpose. Seven of the ten schools were found to be interdenominational, two were denominational in type, and one operated on the federated basis.

The program of religious education at State schools. The purpose of the school of religion at a State school is to offer opportunity for religious instruction at these State schools of higher learning when such instruction cannot otherwise be given. The instruction is to be offered under favorable conditions and with high standards of efficiency in method and rigor of conduct. The assumption is that such courses will be worthy of accrediting by the university. Usually, such accrediting is obtained. This is necessary in order to obtain the interest of the students in the courses.

Objectives sought by these schools: (1) To educate students in the form, history, and meaning of religion.

(2) To train students to serve their community in its religious interests by preparing them for religious leadership.

(3) To create possibilities for stimulating those students interested in religious callings, that they may make their choice and begin vocational preparation.

(4) To provide courses leading to graduate study in religion.

Facts concerning the schools of religion. Because the schools of religion are in their beginning stages and the approach to their task is so varied, difficulty is experienced in organizing data concerning them. The number of teachers in the schools varies from one to five. They are usually supported by funds from the denomination which they represent. Their teaching is nonsectarian in character and in point of effectiveness and rigor must compare favorably with the standards set by the university. Ordinarily, the conditions and standards with respect to teaching responsibility, outside duties, prospect as to continuity of program, and such matters are established at the beginning of the school's activities.

The number of course registrations in the median school of the ten State institutions reporting was 208. Compared with the large number that gather at these great centers of learning and the high percentage that have church relationships, this number does not seem large. Still, a comparison of nine schools of religion with nine typical church colleges revealed the fact that the median school of religion has three fourths the number enrolled that are enrolled in religion courses in the median church college; or, the actual figures are 208 as compared with 283. The recent origin of the schools of religion in State school centers is a factor not to be overlooked in such a consideration.

Eight schools of religion reported regarding their annual expenditures. Their figures show that the expenditure for promoting the program of religious education at the median school is $15,000. Comparing this with the typical church college, it was found that the average church college spends about 45 per cent as much on religious education as the average school of religion at a State university.

These schools of religion are poorly endowed, if endowed at all. Their financial instability is one of the decided weaknesses concerning them. However, it speaks much for the enthusiasm for their cause and the interest they have already generated that sufficient funds are accumulated year by year to continue their operations.

Assets for religion in State schools. Although it is true that the State schools themselves are not permitted deliberately to teach religion, they do give courses that are distinctly of such character. Such courses are now given as: History of Religion, Philosophy of Religion, Psychology of Religion, History of Religious Movements, Oriental History, Anthropology, Sociology, Literature of the Bible, Study of the English Bible.

The importance of the place of religion in human culture and its direct influence in broadening higher education cannot well be denied. There must be an intellectual appreciation of religion, but there also must be scientific investigation of religion. No broad basis for instruction in religion can be established if the sects persist in demanding that such instruction must be given in terms of each of their histories or separate sets of dogmas. The State university furnishes a base where the study of religion may be carried on in a scientific and wholesome manner. Jew, Catholic, and Protestant together can find a common ground upon which to base their study of religion if the investigative and appreciative attitude is manifested toward the subject. Thirty-three of the 42 State universities in 1923–24 offered a total of 394 semester hours in religion. The total enrollment in religion courses was 3,248 students, not taking account of duplications.[17]

Many of the aims of education and religion are similar. Religion must meet the needs of the present by integrating with scientific truth and democratic social ideals. In the struggle of life much confusion and waste of religious energy have taken place because of the lack of knowledge. Religion should play a prominent part in bringing about harmony of social ideals and personal culture.

Four reasons are clear why this program of religious education at State higher institutions should be carried out: *First*, the university is under obligation to make available to the students the means of a complete education in all of the field of the world's thought; *second*, the aims of religion and education conceived in personal and social terms are similar; *third*, the demand for trained leadership, and especially religious leadership; *fourth*, the need of the interpretation of religion in terms of modern thought.

Some conditions under which schools of religion operate. The semester hours of religion offered in ten schools of religion at State institutions were: Bible, 106; religion, 89; religious education, 11. Only four of the ten schools offered courses in religious education. The median number of hours that might be applied toward graduation in the adjacent university was 6. The number of semester hours given by the ten schools of religion that were accredited by the adjacent university or college was 253. The largest number of accredited hours granted to any one school is 59, the least number being 3. A handicap is experienced by the schools of religion when only a small number of hours, like 3, can count toward graduation.

The standardization of schools of religion has three limitations: (1) tradition, (2) law, and (3) public opinion. One or the other of these reasons or all of them will, undoubtedly, keep the school of religion from reaching its highest effectiveness for many years to come. These limitations are to be noted in such evidences as divided church forces, disagreement as to form of organization, limited financial resources, lack of building and equipment, and insufficient number of equipped teachers.

Yet an increasing number of religionists as well as educators believe that religion can be taught. And, believing so, they are deeply concerned that the religious educational needs of the students on the campuses of these State schools shall be met. They have confidence that educational agencies can bring about moral and religious changes in social living. Also there is an increasing recognition of the fact that a democratically governed society must find its final authority in the moral and religious sanctions of the individuals of which it is composed.

CHAPTER VIII

THE DEVELOPMENT OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN COLLEGES

Soon after the turn of the present century religious education became a term to be conjured with by those interested in the advance of Christianity. During the years since, the forces at work that are commonly gathered under that term have developed increased momentum. So true is this that their activities have been designated as a movement. Religious education has for its purpose the application of educational principles to the development of religion. Or, more specifically stated, it has for its main purpose the making effective of the religious motive in life; and, furthermore, to achieve those aims peculiar to the function of religion and the church. The ultimate aim is conceived as Christian life and character expressing itself adequately in one's relations to God and to his fellows.

The impetus for religious education, though not born specifically in the college, very quickly found lodgment there. In the minds of such men as Cope, Coe, Athearn, Betts, Stout, and others the vision of possibilities for religion by the educational process rapidly took shape. Along with these educators a considerable number of clergymen saw similar possibilities.

For a long time prior to this period colleges here and there had given, each in its own way, a course or two to assist those definitely interested in Sunday-school activities, but never had there been any definite program of courses given with the underlying thought of placing the total drive of educational thought and principles behind such a program.

The malevolent and destructive tides of the Great War took much that was precious to our civilization and swept it into oblivion. Among these precious things religion lost its share, and into the place of what was lost came the seven devils of crudity, ruthlessness, disrespect for personality, and rapine, which since have threatened to founder religion and sink the church. About every miserable and contemptible policy and act of the war on both sides claimed the good graces of an eternal and supposedly lovable God.

One star of hope seemed to rise out of the black night of war's despair. If men could be taught to fight so effectively, it appeared certain that they could be taught to do some other and better things just as well. Mr. H. G. Wells had made a statement at the close of the war which was repeated quite frequently—that there was a race on in civilization between education and ignorance. At this time also conceit and pride had vanished and a rather respectful humility began to appear.

Paradoxically enough, high idealism, driven by tremendous emotional tides, was everywhere in evidence throughout the Western world. Wherever idealism is to be found religion is present in large measure. Education was the fond hope of the reconstruction period, and was given universal encouragement. But men had learned also that education which is not grounded in the imponderable elements of man's religious nature is shifting sand. The ravaging beastliness of the four-years' war had taught them that much too plainly. There came a rather clear understanding in the minds of many thoughtful men in the fields both of religion and education that the forces in each must be inseparably linked together to establish the desired features of civilization.

Differences in viewpoint. Many whose chief concern was with religion did not share the hopes of education. Their dominant passion had been evangelistic in character. They retained hopes of salvation by this method and cared little for education, in fact, at times, opposed and ridiculed it. For them hope of heaven, or salvation even in this world, could have no assurance in anything other than a full and complete one-act conversion. Even with childhood and youth this was thought to be necessary, overlooking the fact that a majority of people come to a rich and full Christian experience by a gradual and developmental process through the years.

On the other hand, there were many educators, reared perhaps on a denatured and secularized education, who failed entirely to appreciate the religious significance of a universal education. They continued the work of their day by developing phases of their theory, oblivious of the fears that shook the very timbers of men's souls.

Immediate causes of growth of the movement for education in religion. Those who understood the nature of the similarity between religion and education began to investigate the facts involved in this relationship. They discovered, *first*, that there had been a considerable decrease in the effectiveness of the evangelistic method; *second*, that the increasing scope and effectiveness of education gave reason further to trust in its strength; *third*, the increasing use of the investigative method, even in the realm of religion, began to show where real values lay, and where false emphasis had been given in the past; *fourth*, a deep desire arose for more religiously intelligent citizenry; *fifth*, a purpose grew to build up church agencies in the light of the increased social knowledge.

The program for religious education in the colleges. Those who fostered the religious education movement in colleges maintained that, if aims were to be reached, leaders should be raised up to carry out the purposes far and wide. To this end several graduate schools developed departments of religious education. Colleges giving undergraduate work began to add courses to their regular offerings in religion and education. Textbooks were created for the purpose. Students in considerable numbers came to be introduced to this new field of endeavor.

Present status. One hundred and seventy-two colleges out of an approximate number of 800 are giving undergraduate instruction in religious education in the United States. The large majority of these colleges that offer such courses are definitely denominational in character. Approximately one third of the denominational colleges and universities in the United States are now offering courses in religious education. The average institution of the 172 in the academic year 1925–26 gave 2.8 courses with semester hours amounting to a total of 6.5. The average enrollment of students in these courses was 13. A total of 147 "paper" courses, constituting 380 hours, was found in 76 of these institutions.[18]

Standards of colleges offering courses. A recent study of the colleges indicates that 60 per cent of the colleges and universities offering undergraduate instruction in religious education are accredited by national or regional standardizing agencies; 21 per cent are accredited by their State educational agencies only; 19 per cent are not listed with any standardizing agency.

The percentage of nonstandard institutions appears rather large. This may indicate that such religious education courses are given without regard to standards, and for the purpose of maintaining faith with the church.

An added incentive may exist in the desire to increase the reasons for support from the church constituency.

Close correlation seems not to exist between high standards of biblical instruction and the provision made for courses in religious education. The study just referred to shows that one half of the institutions in which courses in Bible are best established give no recognition to courses in the teaching of religious education.

Status of teachers. From the standpoint of academic training teachers of religious education in undergraduate colleges rank high. Most of these teachers have completed a course in theological training before entering the field of religious education. Out of a large group of such teachers it was found that 86 per cent had degrees beyond the baccalaureate; 60 per cent hold Masters' degrees, while 27 per cent hold Doctors' degrees. This does not take into account years spent in graduate study which are not represented by any degree. The assertion has been made that in many church colleges the professor of religious education is often the best-trained man on the faculty.

The chief institutions where the teachers have taken their graduate training are: Columbia University, Northwestern University, University of Chicago, Boston University, University of Iowa, Yale University, University of Pennsylvania, and Denver University. These graduate schools have been proven to be nondenominational in character, as indicated by the fact that those who have studied in these schools are teaching in a large number of different denominationally supported institutions.

It has been further shown that three out of four professors of religious education in American colleges have had a complete or partial theological training. It should be observed also that the teachers have, on the whole, a much more complete training in religious subjects than in education.

A further observation may be made of the fact that many teachers, especially the older men, have gained much of their training by means of years of experience in this special field. The one danger in this is that such teachers seem more apt to fall into ruts instead of developing new modes of procedure.

Methods of instruction. A study of the religious education courses and the method of presenting them reveals the following facts: *First*, some kind of introductory courses dealing with what are called principles is the type most frequently given. The *next* group of courses most often given is that dealing with organization and administration problems in the field. The *third* largest group has to do with methods of teaching. If other courses are given, they most often deal with the "psychological approach" which is deemed so necessary in religious education.

The field of religious education being so new, there have been relatively few textbooks of college grade written. Hence the textbook method of instruction does not bulk large. Neither does the old lecture method seem as prominent as might be expected. The discussion-report method, or a combination of lecture, recitation, discussion, and report is being used in a large number of instances. In a majority of colleges courses in practice and observation form an essential part of the curriculum in religious education.

Opportunities for the study of life-situations are abundant. Week-day schools of religion, Sunday schools, Boys' and Girls' Clubs, and Christian Associations give the student opportunities for observation and experiment. Further activities often may be carried on in connection with city or county Councils of Religious Education. Perhaps all too often practical application of teachings fails to be made. Hampering conditions, eliminating the possibility of sound educational procedure, are found in a considerable number of these organizations. However, contacts should be made with them and at the same time standards for the educational method in religion should be established and maintained.

Already it has been shown that undergraduate students have not responded in large numbers to the course offerings in religious education. In this connection three statements may be made: *First*, that the zeal for offering courses in the field may exceed the demand made for them; *second,* leaders in the church could assist greatly in developing the proper demand by creating an expectancy that college students returning to local communities should be fitted to teach religion effectively; *third,* more adequate instruction of beginning students regarding present social and religious problems would do much to make clear the purposes of religious education.

Christian Association organizations and other voluntary religious groups have not been included in detailed consideration because of their varied nature and the lack of regular instructional elements in their programs. These organizations are highly useful in effecting certain social purposes among those who have particular religious vocations in mind as their chosen field of future activity.

Religious education, hailed by some as being a panacea for all of our postwar ills, is now steadily gaining respect from those who understand its real nature. Educators are beginning to appreciate the fact that a child is not trained who does not properly understand moral and religious values. Leaders in religion are coming to the point of view that instruction in religion is the key to advancement for the church and the establishment of the kingdom of God. People in all walks of life readily assent to this method and appreciate its merits without explanation of theories.

CHAPTER IX

THE COLLEGE CONTRIBUTES TO RELIGION

Does the college lead or is it being led with respect to religious thought and life? Does it merely share in the spirit of the times or, peering ahead, does it look into the future and select a path? The ancient universities of Paris, Bologna, and Salerno were said to be most conservative in the days of the Renaissance. They became trailers in the rear instead of leaders in the van of thought. The new ways of thinking and the important discoveries were brought about outside of the universities. Is this true of the universities and colleges to-day? Is the quiet reformation which we are told is taking place in religious thinking occurring outside the cloistered walls of the colleges and universities?

While the present colleges are conservers in many respects, it would appear that they are leaders too in religious thinking. Cast about as one may to find the origin of new and progressive movements in religion in the United States, he is at last led back to some university or college. Looking over the field to-day one is struck by such personalities—just to name a few—as Macintosh, Streeter, and Jacks in England; Otto, Schweitzer, and Barth in Germany; and Fosdick, McConnell, Coe, Bower, Betts, and Stout in America. All of these leaders of religious thought, if not directly connected with a college or university, have been intimately associated with such an institution in the recent past. Other names that might be mentioned would as readily associate themselves with some collegiate institution.

The fact is leadership in religious thought in the United States at present is a direct outgrowth from activities in college centers. Every developing and progressive tendency in religion has associated itself with education. There is nothing strange about this. Religion in its best seasons has ever done so. When it has associated itself with despair and ignorance those days have not been fruitful for civilization.

Just now the tide of science is at its full. All must conform to the measures of science. There is something very wholesome about this. Religion which had dealt so interminably in metaphysical abstractions, has been compelled to leave off dealing with the merely ethereal and meet present ethical issues here and now in the socially complex world. Religion has not liked this so well. Some of its proponents have shaken their heads and felt humiliated, because they deemed it beneath the dignity of such a high-born life to regard the social injustices in the workaday world of the mines, sweatshops, and factories. Slowly but surely the test is being applied, and the world is now beginning to say of religion that it must show its worthiness in terms of results just the same as other social institutions.

A change of method. One of the clear evidences of this change is found in the method of religious training. From a disciplinary superimposed procedure the change has been to a more investigative, utilitarian study of the nature and function of religion. Until recently it was quite generally understood that religion once expressed in terms of theology admitted no change. Such a point of view necessarily created in the student either an attitude of rebellion or of entire submissiveness. Few were courageous enough to rebel, hence the submissive attitude prevailed.

We now stand in the presence of change. The modern student, even in the departments of religion, breathes the air of free learning and investigation. In almost every department of the college the student can use his initiative in gathering data and forming conclusions on the basis of discovered facts. No longer does he tolerate closed systems of thinking. This interesting field must lend itself to his investigative spirit. Authority must rest upon a sufficient number of known facts that will bear its weight. Religious facts must correlate with other known facts and move along co-operatively, helping to push forward the great adventure of life. Departments of religion are assisting in developing this point of view, and they are commanding the increasing respect of earnest, truth-seeking students.

Clear thinking in religion is much needed by students. This is made evident by the conflict of beliefs which he meets. Everybody who is in the least acquainted with psychology knows that youth has a positive tendency at one stage to believe. But what shall he believe? If he is asked to believe in the doctrine of the Trinity, in the verbal inspiration of the Bible, in the virgin birth of Jesus, and other ancient church dogmas, the intelligent youth finds that even the different ministers whose authority he has been called on to accept from his childhood up, split sometimes fifty-fifty concerning these beliefs. Indeed, he finds among them almost every shade of difference from extreme positiveness to extreme negation on almost every religious belief that in the past has been considered important.[19]

Evidently, if the student has any independent manhood about him and cherishes a desire for an intelligent Christian faith he will be glad to investigate the claims of religion for himself. The famous Tyndall gave expression to the following: "We have been scourged by invisible thongs, attacked from impenetrable ambuscades, and it is only to-day that the light of science is being let in upon the murderous dominion of our foes." Science has steadily turned its light into the dark places. Scientific knowledge has beaten off a vast number of these mysterious foes of mankind. Even religion has been a great benefactor at the hands of science.

The twilight of the sciences. Until yesterday science was embedded in a determinism that was adamant. The scientist emerged from his laboratory to announce his awful truths, and the world listened—all but the religious part of the world. The proponents of religion could not be reconciled to this new Sinai of the laboratory. College Departments of Religion and the Departments of Science became estranged. They seemed to deal with two different worlds, or, unfortunately, thought they did.

If we may rely upon information now coming from the scientist, there is a principle of indeterminancy in nature which casts considerable doubt on the universality of causality; it gives "even to the atom a certain amount of free will."[20] If this be true, science as the competing creed of the last century or two is about to pass as a dominating power over men's minds. If the world in any degree is out of hand as far as law is concerned, then we may be at the end of the all-embracing scientific era.

The upshot of all this, as far as the Department of Religion is concerned, is that as wholesome an attitude of mind may be developed in this department as in any other. New truth is discoverable in religion as elsewhere. Religion develops a wholesome respect for the forces in the universe and a more constant alertness to new power and new beauty in nature. Mechanistic theories, valuable as their contribution has been, must give way sufficiently to allow the dominance of the material universe by the power of personality. Respect for machines must be subordinate to respect for persons.

The college trains public school teachers. The dean of Manchester College found by a survey of 156 colleges in 35 States that "the State normals are utterly inadequate to prepare a sufficient number of teachers for the public schools. In 1924–25, 21 per cent of the graduates of men's colleges, and 72 per cent of the graduates of the women's colleges respectively entered teaching." With the work of the State normal school we are not here concerned. The significant fact in the above quotation, for our present purpose, is that a vast army of young schoolteachers are being trained in the privately endowed colleges.

Do these students who go out to teach in the public schools receive any religious training that would reflect itself in the teaching of the classroom? While no statistics have been obtained to answer the question, it is a well-understood fact that students passing through colleges that give such training become introduced to religion in numerous ways. In some instances the study of religion is in their list of requirements. Again, special attraction is developed so that some work is elected in that field. And, further, whatever that intangible element we call religious atmosphere in a college may be, it has an effect on prospective teachers. It hardly needs to be said that whenever teachers intelligently reflect upon their teaching task, at once the building of Christian character must appear as a considerable part of that task.

The college contributes trained leadership. Four per cent of the students enrolled in 22 church colleges in 1923–24 were in training for paid vocations within the church, according to the writer's study, to which previous reference has been made. Ministers, directors of religious education, teachers in schools of religion, and social workers constitute the groups under this heading. Over four fifths of the total number thus making preparation are looking toward the ministry as their life work. Less than 3 per cent plan to be teachers in colleges.

Much discussion has taken place on this subject with little thorough understanding of the facts. Certainly, a much better trained ministry is needed. When religion is intrusted to an ignorant leadership the days are evil, as history has shown, and there is then little health in society. A college training with some courses in religion as a groundwork should be an essential requirement for every student looking forward to the ministry.[21]

Directors of religious education are specialists. They carry the responsibility of developing educational standards in the local church or in a given church area. From the beginning of their college course on through the graduate school they avail themselves of the courses that deal with their chosen field. Hence, they become fitted to make careful and fruitful application of educational principles to the processes of religious development. The religion department of the college contributes much by way of discovering, encouraging and training students of good abilities to enter this new and important vocation.

The college trains church school teachers. Perhaps not to the extent that should obtain, but surely to some appreciable degree, the college does assist in equipping those who are to do effective teaching in church schools. To multiply words about the poor, dying rate at which a vast amount of church-school teaching proceeds is not to the point. Here and there in these schools an excellent bit of teaching is being done by one who really has an adequate background of training in the study of religion.

A common employment for trained students in religion is teaching in the vacation church schools. Communities that are desirous of securing teachers and administrators for their vacation church schools with increasing frequency turn to the colleges for such assistance. Special courses are often given in the religion departments to meet this need.

And, finally, the week-day schools of religion find it positively essential to obtain highly trained teachers. Teachers in these schools must compare favorably in ability and training with the teachers in the public schools. Lotz, in his survey of current week day religious education, found that out of a total of 333 teachers reporting in this field of endeavor 125, or 38 per cent, were college graduates. He also found that 72 per cent of the 77 schools reporting had one or more college students in their employ.[22] According to Athearn's *Indiana Survey*, the 14 colleges there, founded primarily for the ends of religious education, and supported by the philanthropy of the churches, devote more than thirteen times as much energy to the preparation of teachers for the State as they do to the preparation of teachers for the church. The denominational colleges of Indiana have strained their resources to meet the approval of the State Department of Education. "They seem not to have felt a similar responsibility for the educational programs in the churches from which they draw their chief support."

Athearn states that "only 58 students in 10 denominational colleges are majoring in religion; 30 of these are in one college." Less than 10 per cent of the teachers in these 256 Sunday schools of Indiana are college graduates. "This would suggest that graduates from denominational colleges have not been trained in large numbers to serve local church needs with the same devotion and energy which they are giving to civic, literary, and social life."[23]

Contributions of research. Scientific method could not be kept out of the domain of religion; it was bound to enter this precinct of life as well as any other. But this was for the good of religion. Integrating the purposes of religion with present social and ethical problems is nothing if it is not a revolution for religion. The task is not completed, yet every step in the path of progress is marked by scientific investigation and increasing demonstrable results.

A few evidences of this fact may be noted. For a long time questions had been raised as to the exact conditions prevailing in the church schools. The Committee on Social and Religious Survey was organized in 1921. Names connected with this committee were John R. Mott, Ernest D. Burton, Raymond Fosdick, and James L. Barton. This organization conducts and publishes studies and surveys and promotes conferences for their consideration. Its announced aim is "to combine the scientific method with the religious motive." With the assistance of this committee and a number of competent educators, Dr. Walter S. Athearn made and published a comprehensive survey of 256 church schools in the State of Indiana. It is known as the *Indiana Survey of Religious Education* and is published as three sizeable bound volumes.

Other evidences of the entrance of the scientific method into the field of religion are to be found in such published works as:

Betts: *The Beliefs of 700 Ministers.*
Lotz: *Current Week-Day Religious Education.*

Alderton, Clapp, Hanna, and others: *Undergraduate Instruction in Religious Education in the United States.*

Bennett: *The Ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (a statistical study of Education status and numerical strength).

McGee: *Religious Education in Certain Evangelical Colleges.*

Boyer: *The Development of Religious Education in Higher Institutions with Special Reference to State Universities.*

Kelly: *Theological Education in America.*

In this connection note should be taken of such scientifically prepared tests as Northwestern University Religious Education Tests, the Boston University Religious Education Tests, Whitley Tests (Columbia University). These and others of a similar character indicate the trend toward carefully obtained data concerning problems in the field of religion.

The studies mentioned do not include the many unpublished investigations that have had an important bearing upon the religious education movement. Nor do they take into account the many religious education projects that have been carried to a successful conclusion in local communities, such as the launching of a program of week-day religious instruction in a local church or city, as the Calumet District project near Chicago, or the Oak Park, Cleveland, Dayton, and Kansas City systems of religious education.

If the student in college is to understand his world and attach a proper personal meaning to it, quite evidently he cannot do so without a fair consideration of religion. After all, the college is a person-centered institution where personalities are put above all else in value. The very source of the student's possibilities of achieving a right view of life is in the search for values. His trained ability to discriminate sharply between right and wrong, or between that which is good and that which is less good, is the greatest contribution that the college makes to him. To establish for himself a Christianized social outlook, to lay down the gage of the moral battle he wishes to fight for in his personal life, to hold intelligently the deep-running purposes of Jesus' way of life—these things the college, properly constituted, can stimulate him to do in the most effective way.

With an ordinary amount of application on the part of the student this should lead to a rich and satisfactory way of living. It should hold the profound Christian elements of life at the center, and keep life organized for unified activity and growth.

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